

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE - 6 JUNE 2017

Title:

**2016 AIR QUALITY ANNUAL STATUS REPORT
AND DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE & MEMBERSHIP
FOR THE AIR QUALITY STEERING GROUP**

**[Portfolio Holder: Jim Edwards]
[Wards Affected: All]**

Summary and purpose:

This report updates Members on the progress of implementing the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) regime, a statutory function aimed at requiring local authorities to review and assess air quality in their areas.

It presents the 2016 Air Quality Annual Status Report for Waverley Borough Council (attached at Annexe 1). This fulfils the Council's commitment to the continuing Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) process. It provides an annual update of recent air quality issues in Waverley, including an update on air quality in the Borough, obtained from its monitoring results during 2015.

The Annual Status Report indicates that in general there was an overall improvement in the measured NO₂ concentrations across the borough, including within the two AQMAs. There were no measured exceedances of the short term NO₂ objective or the annual mean or 24-hour PM₁₀ objective at the automatic monitoring sites.

The report also presents the proposed draft terms of reference and proposed membership of the Air Quality Steering Group, attached as Annexe 3. The principle of establishing an Air Quality Steering Group was agreed by the Executive on 4 April 2017. This group will help ensure that Waverley is able to continue to work with Surrey County Council and other groups and agencies to support the work on developing solutions to the air quality issues identified by monitoring and assessment work that has been carried out by Waverley Borough Council.

How this report relates to the Council's Corporate Priorities:

Community Wellbeing- Air quality monitoring is undertaken by the Environmental Health Team who aim to provide a high quality public protection service.

Environment- Air quality is key to the health of humans and ecosystems. Road traffic is one of the major contributors to air pollution in Surrey. Air pollution is the presence of contaminant or pollutant substances in the air at a concentration that interferes with human health or welfare, or produces other harmful environmental effects.

Financial Implications:

There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report. The cost of ongoing monitoring and reporting is funded within the Council's revenue

budget. Measures to mitigate poor air quality can involve very significant costs but will be the responsibility of a range of other agencies as well as Waverley Borough Council.

Legal Implications:

Section 82 of the [Environment Act 1995](#) requires local authorities to review air quality in their respective areas and assess whether the air quality standards specified in the National Air Quality Strategy (NAQS) are being achieved.

Where these are not being met, or are not likely to be met, local authorities are required to designate air quality management areas (AQMA) and prepare and implement remedial action plans ([section 83](#)).

This is known as the local air quality management (LAQM) system. The LAQM system does not place an absolute obligation on local authorities to achieve the standards set out in the NAQS. Under the LAQM system, local authorities are merely required to act "in pursuit of the achievement" of the relevant air quality standards. An absolute obligation on local authorities would not be appropriate as air pollution regulation and enforcement is not entirely within their control.

Background

1. Under Part IV of the Environment Act 1995, all local authorities are required through Local Air Quality Management to regularly review and assess air quality in their areas to determine whether or not the air quality objectives applicable in England have been or are likely to be met.

The 2016 Air Quality Annual Status Report

2. The Government introduced an Annual Status Report (ASR) that must be completed each year for local authorities in England. The key functions of the ASR are to provide a public-facing summary of the local air quality situation and the main air quality improvement measures being taken. The ASR also includes a technical report with more detailed information as well as monitoring/modelling of key pollutants.
3. The 2016 ASR was completed using the template for Local Authorities provided by DEFRA in Technical Guidance (LAQM.TG16). On completion the ASR was submitted, as required, to the Secretary of State (DEFRA) for consideration. An Appraisal Report containing DEFRA's comments has now been received, to which the Council is expected to have regard. These comments include 'On the basis of the evidence provided by the local authority the conclusions reached are acceptable for all sources and pollutants'. A commentary was provided to help inform future reports. The DEFRA Appraisal report and commentary are attached as [Annexe 2](#).
4. The Council currently has two Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA). One at Farnham and one in Godalming. Both AQMAs were declared in 2004. The Farnham AQMA was declared for exceedance of the annual mean NO₂ objective and the 24-hour mean objective for PM₁₀. The Godalming AQMA was declared for exceedance of the NO₂ annual mean objective. A third AQMA at Hindhead was also declared in 2004 but was revoked in 2015 following completion of the Hindhead Tunnel project in 2011. Both current AQMAs are on primary routes which experience regular traffic congestion.

5. The Council adopted its first borough-wide Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) in 2008 and has subsequently updated it to incorporate the outcomes of a traffic management feasibility study conducted in cooperation with the Highway Authority, Surrey County Council (SCC) in October 2014.
6. The 2016 Annual Status Report confirms that there was an overall improvement in the measured NO₂ concentrations across the borough, including within the two AQMAs. There were no measured exceedances of the short term NO₂ objective or the annual mean or 24-hour PM₁₀ objective at the automatic monitoring sites.
7. In 2015 the annual mean NO₂ objective was however exceeded at three of the diffusion tube sites. Two of the measured exceedances were within the Farnham AQMA. (Ref:Farn 1 and 1B both in The Borough). A third diffusion tube site (Ref: Farn 12 Wrecclesham Road) outside the existing AQMAs measured slightly in excess the annual mean objective for NO₂ but, when this was corrected for distance to the nearest residential property, the concentration fell below the objective. The Council will continue to monitor in this location to assess future concentrations.
8. There were no measured exceedances within the Godalming AQMA. This suggests possible movement towards compliance with the annual mean objective for NO₂ at that location.
9. The automatic monitoring station is located within the AQMA, adjacent to Ockford Road in Godalming town centre. The electricity to the monitor is temporarily switched off (for health and safety reasons) to allow work to continue on the building site for the new Christian Science Church. Officers are currently in discussions with SCC to have the monitoring station relocated in a nearby position. When in operation it continuously monitors nitrogen dioxide concentrations. The Council will review the trend data for this site in future years to establish whether it might be appropriate to undertake a Detailed Assessment and move towards revocation of the AQMA.
10. The next Annual Status Report is required to be submitted to DEFRA in June 2017. The data for this report has been collated and this data is now being ratified by independent experts. Once this is completed the report will be finalised for submission to DEFRA.

Air Quality Steering Group

11. On 4 April 2017 the Executive considered a report from a Sub-Committee of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the Council's progress with air quality management. That report recommended the formation of an Air Quality Steering Group as outlined in Guidance from DEFRA (LAQM.PG16) and the Executive agreed that recommendation.
12. The Air Quality Steering Group (AQSG) will enable Waverley to work more effectively with Surrey County Council, other agencies and groups in support of their work on developing solutions to the air quality issues identified by the monitoring and assessment work that has been carried out by Waverley Borough Council. The proposed draft terms of reference of the AQSG and its proposed membership are attached as Annexe 3.

13. Officers are in the process of contacting the key agencies in order to arrange the inaugural meeting of this group and will progress this work once the proposed membership of the group is agreed by the Executive.

Conclusion

14. Waverley Borough Council is continuing to meet its statutory responsibilities relating to air quality monitoring. The results in the 2016 Annual Status Report show an overall improvement in air quality across the borough as a whole but does highlight two key areas where more work needs to be focussed to address continuing problems.

15. The formation of the Air Quality Steering Group will help focus the energies of all parties on measures to address these issues and continue to explore the possibility and appropriateness of any available external funding to assist with this work.

16. The AQSG will also be able to take an overview of air quality elsewhere in the Borough where there are concerns about trends in air quality or the potential impact on air quality of future developments.

Recommendation

It is recommended that members receive the 2016 Annual Status Report (ASR), attached as Annexe 1 for Waverley Borough Council and agree the terms of reference and membership for the Air Quality Steering Group or make any necessary revisions.

Background Papers

- Annexe 1 The 2016 Air Quality Annual Status Report for Waverley Borough Council
- Annexe 2 Appraisal Report and commentary from DEFRA
- Annexe 3 Draft Terms of Reference and membership of the Air Quality Steering Group.

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